

E-votional 95

## **Psalms and Hymns**

Colossians 3:15-16 (ESV),

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

This verse of scripture came right after the one that talks of letting the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, just to highlight the section and context that this passage of Scripture is coming from. So the peace of Christ and the word of Christ are supposed to rule and dwell in us as Christians richly. Really, these two are going to form a cause and effect situation as we read further.

The cause is, of course, the peace of Christ as well as the word of Christ ruling and dwelling in our hearts richly. The effect is that such a one will be able to teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, while also singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with a heart filled with deep gratitude.

Now, to understand who this is speaking to we need to look at Colossians 1:2 (ESV),

To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae.

Notice, this letter was not just written to pastors, but to the saints and faithful brothers. In short, this was written to all Christians. I clarified this for a specific reason. Let me explain. We have gotten so used to having services at church all evolving really around one person who teaches. Yet is that real fellowship as described in the Bible? Let me further say that I am in no way trying to derail the office of pastor in today's traditional sense. No, I would never do such a thing. However, I am trying to bring the church to another degree of glory where we understand that the pastor is not the only one who can teach in a service. Further, the church is a body of born-again believers and not a service we

attend on Sunday or Saturday. It is, however, a vibrant and living body of believers who are the church and when we gather we all have something to share. The focus was never meant to be entirely on one individual. This is why we read in this letter to all Christians to let the peace of Christ rule in their hearts and also to let the word of Christ dwell in them richly so that they also may be able to teach and admonish one another and also sing to one another psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. This does not mean that every single believer is then classified as a teacher, but it does mean that every believer has a gift and ought to share it. But if that is the case, in order to keep in step with the Word of God in the church, do we allow for this to be exercised, or do we as many today guard the pulpit and hinder actual discipleship?

Let us further discuss the role of the Holy Spirit. In the church, the Holy Spirit works in the whole body. But what would happen if week after week we put all of our focus on one member of that body. Let's use a physical illustration here. It would be likened to a person constantly leaning on one leg and rarely using the other one for support. For further clarity, look at one who sprains an ankle. They don't necessarily just hobble around all the time on the one good foot, do they? No, of course not. They are usually given crutches to balance out the weight. So it is in the church that there are actually many other members. But what would happen if while in church we acted as if there were not many? I would have to say that according to Scripture since each member has a role to play in the edification of the rest and also that we know the Holy Spirit works through the many, not just the one. I would have to conclude that there may be a lack of serious edification and because this lack would be present so would there be a deficit of maturity in the body of Christ. Remember true fellowship is where the entire body operates in the gifting that each has been assigned. When I say gifting, we are not just saying, there is one who greets at the door, one who counts the tithes and receives them, one who sings on the worship platform, and one who teaches. I am not calling these out as bad, for they are certainly necessary to a degree. However, I am saying that there is so much more that is not being experienced because many of the other members do not get the significance they are called to in the church. Nor are they allowed the opportunity to grow and stretch by way of exercise and use of their giftings.

Again, let me repeat that this letter was to include all the saints and the faithful brothers in Christ. So we are saying that each member has something to teach, something to sing, some understanding to offer that just might equip another who is sitting by the wayside waiting for the Word of God as spoken through one faithful saint by the Holy Spirit to another. In this way, we can glorify the Lord and say truly God is among us.

I would like to add another nugget of truth for you to digest. Let me add that

psalms and hymns here are not just referring to a hymnal that you may have at your church under the chair. Nor is it just the book of Psalms. Although these are true and accurate psalms and hymns there is something that we may not understand about them that maybe we should understand. Let us start with David who wrote lots of Psalms. It is not the specific psalms that he wrote that Paul was exhorting the believers to sing. It was rather the meaning and intention of the word psalm itself. In other words, it was the heart of the psalm and not just the words penned by another. You see many psalms were psalms of deliverance for example. One wrote about a time of distress and how during that distress they cried out to the Lord and He heard them and delivered them out of all their troubles. very quickly here, a psalm is then a word of personal testimony about the Lord, His goodness, and power to save among many other attributes that He has.

In short, the psalm and hymn that I believe Paul was writing about was something personal and real to each one giving the psalm. Very simply, it would be likened to someone getting up in the pulpit to share a personal testimony about how God intervened in their life. When they are allowed to share these testimonies often the Holy Spirit would greatly use them to help edify, equip, and mature another who may be listening to said testimony. My life personally, has been more impacted by this than any significant teacher of the Word honestly. I get more out of hearing another connect the Word of God to their life with real life on life experiences and accounts of how God moved in their life. After all, when you read the Psalms that is what they are. I owe much of my maturity in the Lord to such people who were bold enough to open up and share these things for it often showed me just how the Lord moved in them and assured me that He could do the same in me.

My intention and devotion in this teaching is to encourage the faithful to exercise their God-given giftings and also to encourage the pastors and teachers and preachers to allow for this to be done in your churches. Quench not the Holy Spirit of God by whom you are sealed. Let God have His way in the church today and forevermore in Jesus name.

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